

Rats and Mice

Rats and mice causes many issues such as spreading diseases, eating, damaging fruits and other garden crops or to a greater extent damaging building conduits and wiring. Rats or mice can be commonly seen during the colder months on your property, ceilings or walls as they seek shelter in buildings and residential areas.

The below are signs indicate that rats are present:

- Visible droppings (up to 18mm long).
- Debris such as snail shells with the sides eaten out, almond shells, cape lilac berries and chop bones left in the corners of shed and other secluded spots.
- Signs of fruit and vegetables having been eaten.
- Damaged food items/containers in pantry or cabinets.
- Squeaking, gnawing or movement noises in walls, cupboards and ceilings, and under floors.

The below are helpful precautions to deter rodents:

Rats can be discouraged and ultimately destroyed by denying them food and shelter. A few simple routines will help get rid of them:

- Don't heap firewood and timber against shed and fences. Stack it clear of the ground at least 20 cm.
- Don't allow junk and garden refuse to accumulate in sheds or around your yard.
- Remove fruit and nuts from trees or vines as soon as ripe. Strip trees completely at the end of the season.
- Clean up food scraps around fowl yards and rubbish bins.
- Keep poultry feeds, bird seed and similar material in rat proof bins.
- Remove or restrict water access/sources.
- Try to make all buildings rat proof by blocking holes and other access ways.
- Prune back overgrown shrubs and cut back growth from fences and building. Avoid "undergrowth" as far as possible.
- Vermin proof all buildings/premises by sealing holes, cavity and other potential access points using sturdy, durable materials such as cast iron grills, heavy-gauge sheet, rich cement mortar or concrete.

Rats and Mice (continued)

The below are possible options for rodent removal:

- Poison baits are the most successful way of destroying rats when used with manufacturer's directions. Baits should be kept out of reach of children and animals and should be replaced when eaten. Baiting should not cease until rodent feeding has stopped for several days.
- **Apply first generation anticoagulant rodenticides** that contains active ingredients:
 - Coumatetralyl (e.g. Racumin)
 - Warfarin
 - Sodium chloride
 - Diphacinone
- To prevent harm to non-target wildlife, **avoid second generation anticoagulant rodenticides** containing active ingredients:
 - Brodifacoum
 - Bromadiolone
 - Difethialone
 - Difenacoum
 - Flocoumafen
- Trapping: The spring "back break" trap is the best for home use. Try out different types of baits.
- Engage a licensed pest control operator.

Rats may carry diseases, do not handle carcasses directly. Use a shovel or similar during disposal.

For further information, please visit: www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/NR/Protect-your-health-keep-rats-under-control.